

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on June 10, 2005. Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 10-20 are allowed. Claims 1-9 are rejected. Applicants respond to the Office Action as follows.

I. Response to claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

The phrase in claim 1 "a recessed cavity surface recessed from the raised bearing surface of the at least one bearing pad and the at least one bearing pad including a leading edge cavity step from the stepped bearing surface" was rejected because it is unclear whether the stepped bearing surface belongs to either the slider or the at least one bearing pad. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the phrase "the slider" before the phrase "including a stepped bearing surface" and the phrase "the at least one bearing pad" before the phrase "including a leading edge cavity step from the stepped bearing surface". As amended, claim 1 is believed proper under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

In claims 3 and 5, the phrase "the plurality of recessed pressure cavities" was rejected on the basis that the phrase lacks antecedent basis. Claim 3 as amended is dependent upon claim 20 and recites the plurality of recessed cavities which provides antecedent basis for "the plurality of recessed cavities" of claim 20. Claim 5 as amended is dependent upon claim 20 and as amended recites the plurality of recessed cavities as recited in claim 20.

The phrase "a length to cross dimension ratio of the at least one bearing pad is less than or equal to 2" was rejected as

vague and indefinite. Claim 9 as amended recites that the at least one bearing pad includes a length dimension and a cross dimension to provide antecedent basis for a length to cross dimension ratio as recited in claim 9.

II. Response to Objections to the Drawings.

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5) because cross-section line 17-17 and line 18-18 in FIG. 16 are not labeled. With this Amendment, Applicants submit formal drawing sheets 1-12 which include replacement sheet 10 which includes the missing labels in FIG. 16.

III. Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-2, 4-5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hendriks, U.S. Patent No. 5,940,249. Claim 1 is independent and claims 2, 4 and 9 depend upon claim 1.

Claims 1-2, 4 and 9 were rejected on the basis that slider 12 of Hendriks discloses at least one bearing pad 32 including a raised bearing surface (top surface of pad 32) and a stepped bearing surface (the top surface of step 36). As amended claims 1-2, 4, and 9 recite that the stepped bearing surface proximate to the at least one bearing pad is recessed from the raised bearing surface. As shown in FIG. 2 of Hendriks, the guard strips 36 of Hendriks proximate to each of the bearing pads 32a, 32b, 32c are not recessed from the raised bearing surfaces of said pads 32a, 32b, 32c as claimed. Thus, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-2, 4, and 9 are respectfully requested.

Claim 5 was rejected on the basis that Hendriks discloses at least two recessed pressure cavities between opposed sides in FIG. 3. Claim 5 as amended depends upon allowed claim

20. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 5 as amended are respectfully requested.

IV. Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 3, and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(b) as being unpatentable over Hendriks in view of White, U.S. Patent No. 5,726,831.

Claims 3 and 6 are dependent upon claim 1 which is allowable over the combination of Hendriks and White and accordingly, allowance of dependent claim 3 and 6 is respectfully requested.

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 USC §103 (b) on page 5 but on page 8 of the Office Action, it indicates that that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. §112 as set forth in the Office Action. Thus allowance of claim 8 is respectfully requested.

Claim 7 as amended is dependent upon allowed claim 20 and thus allowance of claim 7 is respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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